

SAMPLE INTERIM MINISTER COVENANT-CONTRACT

Between

(church)

And

(clergy)

For the purpose of providing interim pastoral leadership during a period of rediscovery and adjustment to change, it is agreed that _____ will begin service as ITM of _____ on _____. It is understood that this Covenant-Contract will be reviewed every _____ months. During this period the ITM and congregation will, in covenant with one another and with the help of God, seek to

- provide worship experiences and the practice of ministry with the congregation and community.
- engage in congregational self-study and goal setting by reviewing the past and planning for the future in such a way as to strengthen and enhance the mission and unity of the church.
- prepare for the ministry of a pastor who will be duly called by the congregation.

It is further agreed that the ITM will not meet with the Pastoral Search Committee or assist in the selection of a pastoral candidate. The ITM may advise the committee in

terms of **process** but this may be done only in consultation with and with agreement of a state, regional or national resource consultant and the chair of the search committee.

It is understood that under no circumstances may the ITM be a candidate for the position of settled pastor. In most denominations such action would constitute grounds for loss of ministerial standing in that denomination.

OUR SHARED EXPECTATIONS

The ITM agrees to provide pastoral and professional leadership for _____ hours per week. Should additional time be needed, the matter will be reviewed by the _____ Board/Committee. Either the members of the church will assist with the pastoral duties or additional compensation will be offered to the ITM.

The ITM will:

(The following is a list of possible pastoral responsibilities for a full-time ITM. Part-time service would be adjusted accordingly.)

- provide leadership of Sunday worship, administration of the sacraments, and special services as needed.
- provide pastoral counsel and/or referral in crisis situations.
- serve as lead teacher and resource for the Confirmation program.
- visit hospitalized and shut-in members and make other pastoral calls.
- provide pastoral services for weddings and funerals.
- attend meetings of and be a resource for boards and committees of the church, plus other groups as requested.

- provide leadership for adult education/Bible study groups.
- provide leadership and training in congregational self-study, future planning, membership outreach, and stewardship.
- provide administrative oversight for the daily affairs of the church, including being “head of staff.”
- remain active in the name of _____ (church), in the _____ (State or Regional Association), and the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches.

The ITM will be responsible to the congregation at large and specifically to the _____ (responsible board or committee within the church.)

The congregation will support and cooperate with the ITM in every way and will:

- attend worship and meetings.
- continue financial support for the church and its missions and ministries.
- support the ITM in the church’s ministry to the community.
- sustain lay leadership and shared ministries.
- establish an Interim Ministry Committee of not more than five persons agreed upon the ITM and the governing board of the church whose purpose will be to serve as a confidential support and advisory group to monitor progress and to maintain communication between the ITM and the congregation.
- participate in the _____ (State or Regional Association) and the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches.

- provide secretarial support services.
- provide financial support and time for the ITM to pursue continuing education opportunities (**best practice guideline is one day for each month of service.**)
- complete a written review of the ITM within 30 days of his/her completion of ministry

It is agreed that this Covenant-Contract shall be in effect for twelve months or sixty days following the extension of a call to a minister elect, whichever comes first, after which time it can be extended up to the time of the start-up of the new pastor. However, twenty-four months shall be considered the maximum time for the interim period. Thirty days notice shall be given in writing by either party of intention to decline an extension.

Because the particular tasks of the interim period need the better part of the year to accomplish, should the congregation wish to terminate the services of the ITM prior to the calling of a pastor, ninety days written notice shall be given and the congregation shall be responsible for maintaining the ITM's regular compensation package, including accumulated vacation and continuing education time for the total of eleven months from the time of the beginning of this contract. If the ITM should wish to terminate this contract prior to the calling of a new pastor, sixty days written notice shall be given.

COMPENSATION

For pastoral services rendered as outlined above, it is agreed that

_____ shall receive the following compensation:

(Best Practice Guideline: A full-time ITM should receive either the same compensation package as the previous pastor or that being offered to the incoming pastor, whichever is greater)

SALARY: \$ _____ per month

HOUSING: \$ _____ per month

AUTO/TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT: _____ cents per mile

CONTINUING EDUCATION ALLOWANCE: \$ _____ for _____ months.

FULL PREMIUM PAYMENTS for appropriate retirement annuity, group life, health, dental, and disability plans.

VACATION with pay accumulating up to 2.5 days for each month of pastoral service or four weeks if a year is served.

MOVING EXPENSES as necessary, or if the ITM lives within commuting distance of the church, a mileage reimbursement of _____ cents per mile for the agreed upon term of service.

DISABILITY - In the case of disability caused by accident or illness, the church shall be responsible for the ITM's full salary for the first three months of the disability, including base salary, housing, average travel reimbursement, payment of the congregation's share of the Family Protection Plan, annuity payments, and health insurance. This agreement shall be in effect by mutual consent of the governing body of the church and the ITM and/or his/her family.

DEATH – In the case of the ITM's death prior to a period of disability the spouse and/or family shall receive full salary and housing for three months plus any earned vacation pay.

By accepting this agreement, effective _____ (date), we hereby attach our signatures making this Covenant-Contract binding upon us in accordance with the above outlined terms.

Intentional Transitional Minister

_____ Date _____

For the Church _____ Date _____

Title _____